Demand No. IX—Forests—Rs. 2,70,410.

Mr. K. Govinda Menon.—Sir, I rise to move for a grant of Rs. 2,70,410 under Demand No. IX "Forests." In diong so, I wish to lay before the House a few of the salient points of the Demand.

1. A sum of Rs. 1,55,530 is required to be spent on timber and other forest produce to be removed by Sirkar agency. It is proposed to extract in 1103, from the forests tapped by the Tramline, the following quantities and species of timber:—

8,000 candies of teak.
2,400 candies of rosewood
50 candies of ebony
4,000 candies of superior junglewood.

2. Under " consumers or purchasers ", the total amount asked for is Rs. 5,360. The main item therein is the pay and allowance of tanadars and the pay of flood watchers. Both these aggregate to Rs. 3,760.

3. Under "stores" come mainly the cost of making furniture and elephant chains.

4. Under "elephants" are included mainly
   a. repair, padding, covering and watching of pits.;
   b. kraaling of new captures;
   c. mahouts' pay and allowance;
   d. annual treatment, etc.,
   e. occasional treatment of sick and weak animals.

5. Under "communication and buildings," the total amount asked for is Rs. 8,596, of which the major items are (a) contribution to Edathingal-padamchemoni road, (b) works to Mulayam Kraal and quarters and c) P. C. R. works.

6. Under " demarcation " is included Rs. 5,000 for carrying out works in connection with exclusions for food crop cultivation.

7. A sum of Rs. 12,800 is asked for sowing and planting maintenance of existing plantations and fire protection of plantations.

8. Under "other works" the main item is the pay and allowance of the temporary staff in the department which aggregate to Rs. 10,540.

9. Under " miscellaneous" the main item is the expected amount of compensation to be paid to land owners for the removal of monopoly trees.

Any further doubt the Members may have on the details I am ready to clear.

Mr. C. A. Kunjunni Raja.—Is he reading the budget ?

Mr. A. B. Salem.—He is leading us to the forests.

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

Mr. K. Govinda Menon.—The details are not given in the budget. I am explaining the details.

Mr. C. A. Kunjunni Raja.—It is enough, if you give us only the information we ask for.

Mr. K. Govinda Menon.—If I read out, they can find. Whatever they ask, I shall explain.

President.—Mr. Salem said that you are taking us to the forests.

Mr. N. Padmanabha Menon.—In the Standing Finance Committee, I raised some questions regarding some items of expenditure, and you were pleased to remark that the Conservator of Forests will prepare a statement, which he will give, when the Demand for Forests is asked for.

President.—What is that about? Please tell me what your point is.

Mr. N. Padmanabha Menon.—That is in regard to the timber and other produce removed by Sirkar agency and in regard to the purchase of a locomotive for the Tramway.

Mr. K. Govinda Menon.—The last will come under Tramway.

President.—Were you not asked to get ready the information?

Mr. A. K. Vengu Ayyar.—That I have got. The Committee was unanimous in their opinion that there should be Tramway for the year 1103, and that the present abolition would be a loss to the State.

President.—As for Mr. Padmanabha Menon's remarks, the Conservator of Forests will be ready to reply.

Mr. N. Padmanabha Menon.—The question was this. There was a proposal to purchase a locomotive for the Tramway, and there was a proposal to remove trees by Sirkar agency. The two qnestions were so interlaced that it could be examined only in one way. That was why I sent in that proposal. But unhappily, I was not present, and so I was not able to explain that point.

President.—The questions were noted and duly considered.

Mr. K. Govinda Menon.—There are 4,541 candies of timber to be got down in one year. There are six locomotives.

Mr. N. Padmanabha Menon. I don't want to explain the expenditure under "Tramway" when we consider "Forests". This is what I want to know. I remember to have signed the interim report of the Special Finance Committee on which Government orders have been passed that no trees that could not be removed before Makaram 1103 should be cut, and that the Conservator of Forests should be instructed on the point.

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

That was the proposal. Nothing was said in the Government orders regarding that point. In the budget speech, the Finance Member had remarked that the Government was pleased to extend the term of the Tramway till the end of 1103.

President.—Information is being collected on the other points in order to pass final orders.

Mr. N. Padmanabha Menon.—That is exactly what I want. Whether the recommendations contained in our report were communicated to the Conservator, that more timber should not be felled than that which could not be removed before 1103.

President.—Government, on a consideration of the whole matter, thought that there was enough stock to be transported. We want to see that all the timber that is available is brought, before the Tramway is taken away. We investigated the matter, whether there is a sufficient quantity, and we were satisfied that there is enough quantity for the work throughout the year 1103. The recommendation of the Finance Committee is that only so much should be cut as can be brought before 1103. We are on different standpoints.

Mr. N. Padmanabha Menon.—If the quantity that is aready felled will require six months to be carried down, then, no further timber should be cut. In that case, the term of the Tramway will have to be extended further.

President.—Let us work and bring as much as possible before we finish our Tramway. That was our view. (*Hear, hear.*) It will not be possible for the department to bring down the quantity of timber before the end of Makaram 1103.

Mr. N. Padmanabha Menon.—Government have not explained the position in the Finance Member's speech. We want the explanation of the Government.

Mr. A. B. Salem.—Will the Government consider the question of leasing out the Tramway, instead of scraping it ?

Mr. A. Sankara Puduval.—With your leave, may I know, if the report of the Special Finance Committee referred to in the Finance Member's speech at page 12 regarding "Forest and Tramway" is placed on the table for reference ?

President.—It is not placed on the table.

Mr. A. Sankara Puduval.—May I know whether any suggestions are made in that report ?

President.—The specific recomendations have been referred to in the details of the report.

Mr. A. Sankara Puduval.—We want just to understand what they say. Is there any objection to lay that report on the table ?

President. I have not considered that question.

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

Mr. N. Padmanabha Menon.—I have already explained the point regarding which I call for information. This is the point. We had recommended in our interim report that the Tramway should be stopped by the end of Makaram 1103, and in order that the stocks already felled may not remain on the hills, we had also recommended that the felling of timber should be stopped by the end of Karkadagam 1102. Now, we find in the budget estimate that a sum of Rs. 1,55,530 has been provided under the head, "Transport of timber by Sirkar agency". I want to khow whether this item refers to the expenditure to be incurred for felling the trees in the year 1103.

President.—It refers to that.

Mr. N. Padmanabha Menon.—That is the information that I want, so that I may decide whether I should press this motion or not.

President.—This amount includes the expenditure necessary for the further cutting of timber. That is to say, this amount takes in a portion of the amount required for the further cutting of timber in 1103.

Mr. C. A. Ouseph.—May I know under what head the income from the rubber estates is made good ?

Mr. K. Govinda Menon.—The ground value has been credited under "Forests" in "Miscellaneous."

Mr. C. Achyuta Menon.—The rent also is credited to "Forests."

President.—That point also has already been raised. That really goes to "Forests."

Dr. A. G. Menon.—How many candies of timber are now in stock ready for transport ?

Mr. K. Govinda Menon.—About 3,000 candies ready for transport.

Dr. A. G. Menon.—How many do you expect to cut next year ?

Mr. K. Govinda Menon. About 17,000 candies.

Dr. A. G. Menon.—Will you be able to convey all these 17,000 candies from the hills down by the end of next year?

President.—He will not be able to do so.

Dr. A. G. Menon.—So he wants to extend the term for another year.

President.—I have satisfied myself that there is enough work for the Tramway for 1103. According to him, the whole stock that is cut could not be completely transported before the close of 1103. That is the position maintained, and from that I argue that there is enough work for the Tramway during 1103.

Dr. A. G. Menon.—Will there be any more timber to be cut next year ?

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

President.—A reconnoitering survey is proposed to be done early next year to see whether there will be any more timber to be cut and removed, from a commercial point of view. If this arrangement will be paying, then we are going to consider the question. A special officer will be appointed to reconnoitre places adajacent to the Tramway lines, to see whether there is good timber available. If there is anything, we can cut and transport it, at the same time bearing in mind that our action does not result in a loss. By this we can get some margin of profit.

Dr. A. G. Menon.—Are we to understand that this will continue for some years more?

President.—We cannot commit ourselves to any definite statement like that on this point at this stage.

Dr. A. G. Menon.—So the time will have to be extended?

President.—I may assure you that, during the whole of 1103 we will have to keep this operation going on.

Mr. S. F. Nunez.—While Mr. Alwar Chettiyar was the Conservator of Forests, did he not make a survey of the area of our forests?

President.—He did.

Mr. S. F. Nunez.—Did he not come to the conclusion that there were 200 square miles of virgin forests to be exploited?

Mr. C. Achyuta Menon.—It is 120 square miles. In the first estimate I understand only 120 square miles was fixed.

President.—How much was it?

Mr. K. Govinda Menon.—I don't exactly remember it. I hope 120 was finally fixed.

President.—We are not able to tell you whether there was a first estimate prepared by Mr. Alwar Chettiyar.

Mr. S. F. Nunez.—Is there not a balance area of 80 square miles of forest which is still untapped by the Tramway, and which should be exploited by the feeder lines?

Mr. K. Govinda Menon.—We have more than 90.

Mr. S. F. Nunez.—Does this area include also the Sholayar Valley?

Mr. K. Govinda Menon.—Yes.

Mr. S. F. Nunez.—If the Tramway is to be abolished, is there any chance of tapping this Valley?

President.—You have to construct two lines, and a realignment has to be made.

Mr. S. F. Nunez.—May I know whether it can be tapped economically?

President.—It is a very difficult question to solve.

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

Mr. S. F. Nunez.—Is there not a proposal to construct a railway line through the Annamalais?

President.—No portion of the line comes through the Cochin territory, except a small portion extending for half a mile or so in our borders, going through Thattakkad, and all the rest goes through the Travancore regions.

Mr. A. Eachara Menon.—Can the three thousand candies now ready be transported without purchasing new machines?

Mr K. Govinda Menon.—I cannot say. If one of the boilers bursts, then we will have to get down new ones, so that I cannot say for certain.

Mr. C. A. Kunjunni Raja.—May I know the quantity of teak and rosewood remaining?

Mr. K. Govinda Menon.—8,000 candies of teak and 2,400 candies of rosewood.

Mr. C A. Kunjunni Raja.—How much can the Tram carry in one year?

Mr. K. Govinda Menon.—This year it is about 13,000. Last year it was 9,000.

President.—They are increasing the quantity.

Mr. C. A. Kunjunni Raja.—Under normal conditions will the Tram carry 20,000?

President.—One year it carried 20,000.

Mr. C. A. Kunjunni Raja.—In the beginning what was it?

President.—29,000 is the highest figure. It has never gone above that. In virgin forests, if we get one log, it will be about 28 or 30 candies. We had such timber in those years. But now we get logs which are only 10 or 12 candies. Recently, i.e., from 1096 onwards, we get only smaller quantities.

Mr. C. A. Kunjunni Raja.—Of this 3,000 in stock, how much teak and how much rosewood have you?

Mr. K. Govinda Menon.—About 2,000 teak and very little rosewood.

President.—But we have got other valuable timbers such as *Irul*, *Thennavu*, etc.

Mr. C. A. Ouseph.—I wish to know the value of forest growth. Does it include timber also?

President.—That will include timber also. Whatever is included in a particular block comes under that head.

Mr. C. A. Ouseph.—I do not think it includes.

Mr. K. Govinda Menon.—Only timber and firewood come under that.

Mr. C. A. Ouseph.—Have the Government to spend anything more to collect these growths?

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

President.—No.

Mr. T. A. Ramachandra Ayyar.—May I know the highest rate of seigniorage on teak that Government receives from contractors?

President.—Rs. 38. I think that is the rate.

Mr. T. A. Ramachandra Ayyar.—What was the rate with Mr. Louis?

President.—In his case also it was Rs. 38.

Mr. T. A. Ramachandra Ayyar.—Some contractors have felled the whole forest, and in that teak also is included. What is the seigniorage rate that is levied on these teaks?

Mr. K. Govinda Menon.—Each tree is valued according to its quality.

Mr. T. A. Ramachandra Ayyar.—My point is that there are contractors who felled and removed timber from forests, and no seigniorage was collected from them.

President.—Teak is not sold on seigniorage rate.

Mr. T. A. Ramachandra Ayyar.—What is that rate?

Mr. K. Govinda Menon.—The rate is Rs. 12 to 18.

President.—Do you allow a man at any time to fell teak on the seigniorage system?

Mr. K. Govinda Menon.—No, Sir.

Mr. T. A. Ramachandra Ayyar.—What is the highest tender you are receiving for teak?

Mr. K. Govinda Menon.—That will depend upon the place. But it will not be more than Rs. 14.

Mr. A. B. Salem.—May I know the amount realised by the sale of the 102 logs which is taken to this year's budget?

Mr. K. Govinda Menon.—Rs. 16,760, Sir.

Mr. A. B. Salem.—Is there any similar sale in the department during this year for the purpose of balancing the budget?

Mr. K. Govinda Menon.—No, Sir.

Mr. C. A. Kunjunni Raja.—When you submitted your report to the Special Finance Committee, you said you had 8,000 candies in stock. What was the quantity of teak and rose-wood in that 8,000?

President.—Whatever transpired in the Special Finance Committee should not be made public.

Mr. C. A. Kunjunni Raja.—These figures, Sir, will be useful to come to a definite conclusion. Only teak and rose-wood are paying. If transport charges are deducted, the rest of the timber brings nothing to the coffers of the State.

President.—Yes, I understand you. You have to get so many facts and figures. Whatever information is really necessary, you may ask without referring to the proceedings of the Committee.

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

Mr. C. A. Kunjunni Raja.—Out of the 8,000 candies in stock, how much was teak, and how much rosewood?

Mr. K. Govinda Menon.—I do not know in what connection I gave the information.

Mr. C. A. Kunjunni Raja.—It was given on 9th June 1926. He gave reference to 8,000 candies in stock at the time he gave the estimate of the stock to the Special Finance Committee.

Mr. K. Govinda Menon.—I am not in a position to remember the species

Mr. C. Achyuta Menon.—To the best of my recollection, the Conservator said that the department has made a net profit of 11,890 rupees out of timber transported. What I want to know is what quantity of timber was disposed of to bring in this revenue.

Mr. K. Govinda Menon.—One thousand and odd candies.

Mr. C. Achyuta Menon.—One rupee is the net gain on one candy. Now, I want to know whether that is the criterion on which he says all the timber can be commercially worked, and will be transported before the Tramway is discontinued.

Mr. K. Govinda Menon.—Yes.

Mr. A. B. Salem.—Does that cover the pay of the Conservator and his subordinates?

Mr. K. Govinda Menon.—No.

Mr. A. B. Salem.—Then the department is *minus*.

Motions Nos. 1—4.

A.—CONSERVANCY AND WORKS.

1. Timber, etc., removed by Sirkar Agency.

Mr. S. F. Nunez.—*To reduce the allotment of Rs. 1,55,530 for "timber and other produce removed from the Forests by Sirkar Agency" by one rupee.*

Mr. N. Padmanabha Menon.—*To reduce the allotment of Rs. 1,55,530 for 9 "A.—Conservancy and Works" by Rs. 55,530.*

Mr. A. B. Salem.—*To reduce the allotment of Rs. 1,55,530 for "timber and other produce removed by Sirkar Agency" by Rs. 55,530.*

2. Timber, etc., removed by consumers and purchasers.

Mr. A. B. Salem.—*To reduce the allotment of Rs. 5,360 for "timber to be removed by consumers and purchasers" by one rupee.*

Mr. S. F. Nunez.—Sir, before withdrawing my token motion, I wish to make a few observations. I am glad to find that at least the Government has pitched upon an earnest line of policy in the working of the Tramway and the Forests. Ever since the inception of the Tramway, and ever since the

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

attempt on the part of the Government to work the O. W. C.; there were many vicissitudes, and many blunders were committed by the Government. I refer only to two instances—the contract given to Messrs. C. P. Louis and Mugaseth. In my humble opinion, it is a loss to the Government. Sir, large sums of money have been spent on the Tramway, and the Government have committed itself to the task of exploiting our forests, and it is the duty of the Government to see whatever remains is brought down. The only Diwan who earnestly tackled the problem of the Tramway is Mr. Bhore. There were other Diwans after him, and I find it is only in your regime that this question has been taken up, and now it can never be put off. There was an attempt on the part of the Government to postpone the working of the Tramway, and as far as possible, to bring down the timber. In this year, I see Rs. 50,000 more provided for removing timber by Sirkar agency.

The motion was withdrawn with leave.

President.—Motion No. 2.

Mr. N. Padmanabha Menon.—I move for the omission of the allotment of Rs. 55,530 from the total allotment. Originally, it was not my intention to move this, but, after hearing the explanation supplied by the Member in charge of the Department, and considering the fact that I myself being a member of the Special Finance Committee who has signed the majority report, I am constrained to make this motion. Sir, the House has now been supplied with the startling information that our forests are being denuded of their valuable trees, and the advantage to the State is a net profit of one rupee a candy. In our report—unhappily it is not available for discussion—the Chairman, in his masterly array of figures, has proved conclusively that the Tramway is being worked at a loss, and that the State is suffering greatly on account of the material loss of timber. That is the considered conclusion of the Committee, and in the interest of the State we have recommended that the Tramway should be abolished. Anyhow, the Government was pleased to pass orders only on a portion of our conclusions. We would, therefore, recommend the continuance of the Tramway till the end of Makaram 1103, but not a day more. The Hon'ble Member for Forests should be made distinctly to understand that the work should not be delayed beyond that period, and not a single candy of timber should be extracted from the forests after the current year, and remain unexported after Makaram 1103.

The Special Finance Committee has every information regarding the working of the Tramway. They were also acquainted

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

with other details of it, and they have sent a majority report. Under these circumstances, an explanation should be furnished as to why the Tramway should be made to work beyond that recommended period. Government has made provision for felling down the trees for one year more. The Hon'ble Member for Forests and Tramway is wisely silent as to the necessity of further felling trees. If the work is to be pushed through, no extension of time will be found necessary, and that is mostly possible to bring them down in 1103 itself. I ask the Government how it is possible to bring down all the trees yet to be cut down in 1103 itself. I submit to this House that this is only the thin end of the wedge. If you are going to allow all this, then you will be flouting the recommendations of the Special Finance Committee, on which we have spent so much money, and which has expended much of its energies and valuable time. I submit that it is highly impolite to allow this demand to pass as it is; a substantial cut should be made, and the Government specially made to understand that no more timber should be felled down in 1103, in view of the recommendations of the Committee. It is indeed a pity that the orders of the Government have not been passed before this budget session, which would have been the proper time to raise this issue. We have lost that opportunity, and we have to wait till the budget for 1104 is presented to this House, by which time the period recommended by the Committee will be over, and their report will be a superfluity. Under these conditions, I press this motion to a division.

This is my individual opinion. It need not now be taken as a party question.

Dr. A. G. Menon.—After some more members have spoken, we will decide whether it should be made a party question or not.

Mr. A. B. Salem.—I rise to support his motion. Meanwhile, I request the Government to give me their impartial ear to the words that I utter to-day in connection with this particular motion. Sir, I am, in all seriousness, going to challenge the department with facts and figures, and therefore it is that I request for this sympathetic attention. Sir, you have given me the figures this morning in answer to certain questions. I shall first confine myself to that particular contract on which certain searching questions have been addressed to the Government. The answer given by the Government Member is, in my view, unsatisfactory. The contract is one on which Government takes two positions to-day. The first part of it is, that only the timber

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

that is cut, and that was available on the date of the contract (which is 10th July 1925) was sold to the contractor, and I have here the quantity available, out of the felled stock at the time the contract was entered into, i, e., not exceeding 1,585 candies (the answer to a question to-day). If that is so, where has this 3,800 come from, and why should 3,428 be brought down and 1,933 discounted and 2,000 and odd delivered? Perhaps, he may mean something hidden. If he has any hidden meaning, I will try to get it before I proceed further. If there is any meaning, I would like to have it. In that case, you have delivered to this contractor more than the contracted quantity. And then, Sir, there is no clause in the contract to give any allowance for difficulties or defects. A lot of timber that was cut and lying in the forest measuring about 3,800 candies were sold in a lump. Though the contract is silent regarding difficulties and defects, yet, you will find 1,033 candies given as allowance. I asked to-day whether that was in the contract, and the Member in charge said it was not in the contract, and it has been explained that the Diwan has passed special orders. He had no right to interfere with the contract. If he stands on authority, I say it is not satisfactory.

Then, in the answer, he says the total amount spent is Rs. 29,299-10-8 ps. leaving out of account the calculation of Rs. 15-11 as. per candy for collection charges together. I have worked out the figures, and the cost of collection comes to Rs. 19,196-12-0, and if we add interest for 9 years, as this timber has been lying there for a long lime, you get at least Rs. 6,500 added to it in the shape of interest, and you will get Rs. 26,500 10-8, the total cost for transport by Tramway and Rs. 3,248-0-0 the cost of transport by railway. You get a total of Rs. 55,294 as the cost to the Government, and the Government has realised value only on 2,395 candies. At what rate they have realised I do not know. The total amount of realization they have given here as less than Rs. 3 a candy, if, of course, the figure is correct, taking not into account the cost of the Tramway. Now, Sir, the contract was at Rs. 44, 1st class Rs. 38, 2nd class Rs. 33, 3rd class Rs. 24 and 4th class Rs. 19 and so on. You take at Rs. 19 a candy, then, you see, you have lost nearly Rs. 19,000 from the 1033 candies.

President.—We have not delivered the full quantity.

Mr. A. B. Salem.—Where is the next quantity to come from? Still the contract is not cancelled. When is the contract to come to an end?

President.—By the end of this year.

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

Mr. A. B. Salem.—Then, Sir, I have worked out these figures.

President.—Your time is up.

Mr. A. B. Salem.—I have got my own motion, and then I shall speak.

Mr. C. A. Ouseph.—Sir, I support this motion for reduction. In doing that, I will only bring a few figures before the House in support of my position. The figures speak for themselves, and no argument is necessary.

Sir, in 1100 the total receipts from forests is Rs. 4,75,633 including Rs. 2,32,506, being the amount realized by the sale of timber brought down by Sirkar Agency. Assume a position in which the Sirkar Agency does not work. Let there be the Conservator's full establishment but not the Sirkar working of the Forests. We have to reduce, therefore, Rs. 2,32,506. Then we get a balance of Rs. 2,43,127. That consists of amounts realized by sale of forest growth, or by way of seigniorage and other sums paid by consumers and purchasers. None of these will fail, and the Sirkar will get a substantial amount from these items. Sir, if you stop the Sirkar Agency at work, you gain the Tramway expenditure of Rs. 1,63,915. Add this, and you get Rs. 4,07,042. As against this, there is an expenditure in that department of 1,25,780 which is composed of 2,03,163 which is the total expenditure minus 77,383, which is the expenditure for Government working of the forests, that is, for bringing down timber by the Government. There is only a balance of 1,25,780. Reduce from 4,07,042 this 1,25,780, and you get 2,81,262. In 1100 what have we got? I can reduce the Tramway expenditure—you have got 1 lakh 8 thousand 555. But from forest growth you got 88,160 and from rubber 24 thousand 946. It comes to 1,13,106. So that, there is a loss of Rs. 4,551. Now, I will pass on to 1101. There, suppose the Government Agency of extracting timber does not work. 4,65,098 is the total income of which 2,53,907 is the income from timber sold out of departmental extraction. Subtract it and you get 2,11,191. To this we have to add the Tramway expenditure of 1,58,786, and you get an aggregate of 3,69,977. As against this, there is the total working charge of the Department of 1,86,069, from which you can reduce the charge for Government establishment, the balance being 1,21,861. From 3,69,977 you reduce this figure and you get 2,48,116. The revenue is normal. The increase in 1100 is due to the larger amount realized from forest growth. It was about 88,000. In 1101 it was only 44,000. So that, Sir, if you scrape the Tramway from the department, and cease to bring down timber on your

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

own account, you get on the average two and half lakhs of rupees. If you want you may take it, if you do not want, of course, it is for the Government to decide.

Mr. A. Sankara Puduval.—Sir, I would add my feeble voice of protest against the injurious policy that is persistently pursued by the Forest Department. In the speech that I had the privilege of delivering at the first session of this Council, I pointed out the figures and submitted to the House that the figures supplied by the department do not compare with the figures given in *the Administration Report.* I have also endeavoured to point out that the working of the department was entirely injurious to our State. I proposed to give the whole staff of the Tramway Department a holiday for a year and give them full salary and yet the Government would be better off.

Of course, my speech was supplemented by the speech of the Hon'ble Member for Chalakkudi, and the figures given are extracted in these printed proceedings, (*re* : the discussion of the Forest and Tramway). Now, things have not at all improved, and inasmuch as you do not find any useful purpose in continuing the Tramway beyond the period suggested by the Special Finance Committee, I am surprised to hear statements made here now that it is proposed to continue the Tramway beyond Makaram 1103 for the purpose of realising the full income. The trees may remain there. They are not dangerous things to be destroyed at any cost. Let us leave these forests alone, more especially when we find that afforestation is not proceeding apace with destruction and denudation. I think it is high time to cry halt to the ruinous policy pursued by the department.

President.—Will you kindly explain, Mr. Govinda Menon? What is wanted is not a forest of figures. But you must justify your position. Why was this concession given to Mugaseth to take so many candies more than as per the conditions of the contract ?

Mr. K. Govinda Menon.—Two gentlemen came forward ; but Mugaseth promised to take the whole lot, and he was selected. He removed some candies. Then he said the stock was inferior, and he complained to the Diwan. The Diwan visited the spot, measured some logs, saw the defect in them, and he ordered that due allowance should be given to them.

President.—Why did he agree to take up the contract? Why should he be given a concession? He entered into a contract with his eyes open.

Mr. K. Govinda Menon.—The Diwan did it.

Mr. A. B. Salem.—And the Member agreed.

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

President.—Did you recommend that? The responsibility rests on you as the Head of the Department, and the Diwan accepts your recommendation. No doubt, the Diwan has the right to veto your recommendations.

Mr. K. Govinda Menon.—I did not recommend it. The Diwan himself did it.

President.—So it is by Government order.

Mr. K. Govinda Menon.—And then, the Member for Chalakkudi said—of course, I do not remember the figures—that the net profit would be 2 lakhs 30 thousand. This 88,000 in 1100 is by sale of forest growth in the Chittur *Kanom*, and 44,000 in 1101 is from general exclusions. That will be going on for 2 or 3 years more. After that we won't get one pie.

Then about consumers and purchasers. As I stated in my general speech, that also will be closed in about two years' time. That is our position.

Mr. O. R. Chummar.—So, the whole forest will be cleared in 2 years, and there will be no yield from the forests and no yield from the Tramway?

President.—Did you follow the figures of Mr. Ouseph?

Mr. K. Govinda Menon.—Not exactly, but I understood the general trend. I suppose, after 2 years, we won't get even the establishment expenditure.

President.—Is this not your position, Mr. Ouseph? Leave off this Tramway altogether. We do not want to bring any more timber. Let the Forest alone; in that case we will be gainers. Is that not your position?

Mr. C. A. Ouseph.—Yes.

Mr. K. Govinda Menon.—We won't get this after two years. After the exclusion in the Chittur Taluk is over, we won't have any more exclusions.

Dr. A. G. Menon.—The Conservator says the Chittur Taluk is to be excluded. Is there any final order issued on that point?

Mr. K. Govinda Menon.—No. The exclusion is over. But the sale is not completely over. Then in the Trichur, Talappalli and Mukundapuram Taluks, there are some, and it takes some two or three years to finish it off.

President.—But we have Machad and Paravattani. Will there be no work there by that time?

Mr. K. Govinda Menon.—Not much.

President.—Then we don't want the Forest Department at all?

Dr. A. G. Menon.—But in Chittur we will get an increase in Land Revenue, if our irrigation system works properly, to compensate the loss sustained by the Forest Department.

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

Mr. C. Achyuta Menon.—Is it worth while to continue the working of the Forest Department at a profit of Re. one per candy to the bitter end? After three years, there would be nothing remaining. Shall we not begin the holiday one year earlier? Our posterity has every right to blame us for continuing this till the last pie is sacrificed.

President.—Of course, we are now concerned only with 1103. If it is one rupee per candy, that is not a satisfactory mode of working.

Mr. C. Achyuta Menon.—For 20 years we were getting only one rupee per candy—capital expenditure on that put together. We get only one rupee per candy and not a pie more.

President.—Suppose you work 1103 fully. Will you be getting more than one rupee per candy?

Mr. K. Govinda Menon.—I shall tell you, Sir. From sale of timber alone I expect 3,76,500 rupees, and then, by sale of Tramway sleepers 36,000; altogether 4,12,500.

Mr. N. Padmanabha Menon.—We were several times disappointed in our expectations in the case of gain from forests. From our experience it is clear that we won't get more than one rupee.

President.—How much is the expected gain per candy?

Mr. K. Govinda Menon.—Rs. 8.

President.—If we work the Tramway for 1103 and bring down not only the timber that is ready there for transport but cut some more valuable timber and bring them down by the Tramway, will it be a gain or loss?

Mr. K. Govinda Menon.—We get Rs. 8 per candy net.

President.—Then how is this one rupee brought about?

Mr. K. Govinda Menon.—The timber was old. Not fresh timber. Otherwise, we will get Rs. 8.

Mr. C. Achyuta Menon.—If the Conservator is so sure of making a profit hereafter, why did he not make such a profit during the last 20 years? Now that the forest has been well nigh denuded, he has hopes of making a profit out of them. Why was he not able to make this promised profit when the Forests were full of valuable trees?

President.—You want to refer to its past history only to show that the Conservator's calculations will not be correct, and we cannot rely upon them?

Mr. C. Achyuta Menon.—Yes. I have to mention one fact also. From 1075 to 77, Mr. Alwar Chetty cut down all marketable teak trees from private lands and sold them for a large amount. If that amount is deducted from the income of the department during the last twenty years, it will appear to have made not a single pie by its work.

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

President.—From the Government's point of view, if it is a losing concern, Government should not go in for that.

Mr. A. B. Salem.—Even now, the Conservator says that it could be worked on a profitable basis.

Mr. M. Krishna Menon.—One word. If you will kindly consider the value of different species of Government timber at Chalakkudi and the current market rate at Ernakulam, you will find that the price of the timber at Ernakulam is about Rs. 3 or 4 less than the Government rate at Chalakkudi. If, to-day, Government makes an enquiry into the prices at Ernakulam at private depots and the price at Chalakkudi, it will be seen that the price at Ernakulam is less. The Conservator will charge Rs. 22 for one candy of *Irul* at Chalakkudi, whereas beautiful *Irul* timber is sold here at Rs. 19 or 20.

President.—Is it so?

Mr. K. Govinda Menon.—About this one specie it is true. I had estimated to sell it at Rs. 22, but, as the current market value was less, I had to reduce it to Rs. 18.

Dr. A. G. Menon.—I propose that the question be now put.

Mr. N. Padmanabha Menon.—I second it.

The closure motion was not put, but the motion to reduce the allotment of 55,530 rupees for "Timber and other produce removed by Sirkar agency" was put to vote and carried.

Mr. A. B. Salem.—A poll, Sir.

A poll was taken. The House divided as follows :—

Ayes.

1	Mr. C. Achyuta Menon	12	Mr. C. A. Kunjunni Raja
2	,, I. E. Ambooken	13	Srimati T. Madhavi Amma
3	,, Chakko Cheruvattur	14	Mr. K. T. Mathew
4	,, O. R. Chummar	15	,, S. F. Nunez
5	,, A. Eachara Menon	16	,, C. A. Ouseph
6	Dr. A. G. Menon	17	,, N. Padmanabha Menon
7	Mr. E. Ikkanda Wariar	18	,, K. S. Rama Ayyar
8	,, C. N. Ittiravi Nambudiri	19	,, T. A. Ramachandra Ayyar
9	,, V. K. Kochunni Menon	20	,, M. K. Raman
10	,, S. S. Koder	21	Dr. A. R. Menon
11	,, M. Krishna Menon	22	Mr. A. B. Salem
		23	Mr. A. Sankara Puduval

Noes.

1	Mr K. Achyuta Menon	8	Mr. C. Matthai
2	,, V. K. Aravindaksha Menon	9	,, I. Raman Menon
3	,, P. Damodara Menon	10	,, Sheik Abdul Qadir Sahib Bahadur
4	,, K. Govinda Menon	11	,, V. B. Vaidyanatha Ayyar
5	,, K. P. Karuppan	12	,, A. K. Vengu Ayyar
6	,, T. K. Krishna Menon	13	Diwan Bahadur Dr. V. Verghese
7	,, K. Krishna Pisharoti	14	President.

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

President.—Then, Mr. Salem.

Mr. A. B. Salem.—One word, Sir. I am withdrawing my motion. I only want to bring to the notice of the Government, now that the Government has been made aware of the feeling of this House, that it is a loss to work the Tramway and the Forests, that there are parties prepared—if the Government is prepared—to take up the Tramway and work at their own cost and give a substantial sum, say no less than a lakh of rupees. Security will be furnished to the Government, and ample safeguards will be furnished to the Government. Because the Government cannot work at a profit, it would be better to hand over this work to private agencies. They will work at their own cost for a period of 3 years, and they will cut and remove the timber, and Government will be able to save a lot of money.

President.—No expenditure will have to be incurred by the Tramway, that is to say for maintenance of the staff, etc.?

Mr. A.B. Salem.—Everything will be undertaken by them, and they will give the Government a lakh of rupees a year. They will take such timber that they can transport during the year. One lakh every year means you will get at the rate of Rs. 4 per candy.

President.—That will save us from a lot of trouble, and we will get a lakh of rupees. That is worth considering. It seems to me a tempting proposal.

Mr. K. Govinda Menon.—But we must get proper security.

President.—Mr. Salem gives his word that there are persons ready to take up the work.

Mr. A. B. Salem.—Yes, Sir. I make a promise that, if the Government is prepared to consider the proposition, there will be parties ready to offer the Government a lakh of rupees for the next three years.

Dr. A. G. Menon.—The Member does not press his motion.

Motions Nos. 3 and 4 of Mr. Salem, not being pressed, were deemed withdrawn.

President.—Then, Motion No. 5, Mr. Ramachandra Ayyar.

Motions Nos. 5 to 15.

4. Stores and Elephants.

Mr. T. A. Ramachandra Ayyar.—*To reduce the allotment of Rs. 16,700 for (4) "Stores and Elephants" by Rs. 10,000.*

Mr. M. K. Raman.—*To omit the allotment of Rs. 16,7000 for "Elephant capture, etc."*

Stores and Elephants—Total.

Mr. Chakko Cheruvattur.—*To reduce the allotment of Rs. 18,000 for "Stores and Elephants' by Rs. 3,000.*

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

6. Organisation, Improvement, etc., of Forests.

Mr T. A. Ramachandra Ayyar —*To reduce the allotment of Rs. 12,800 for "(6) Sowing and planting" by Rs. 4,000.*

Mr. A. B. Salem.—*To reduce the allotment of Rs. 12,800 for "Sowing and planting" by one rupee.*

Conservancy and Works—Total

Dr. A. G. Menon—*To reduce the allotment of Rs. 2,20,806 for "Conservancy and Works" by one rupee.*

B. SALARIES AND ESTABLISHMENT.

Subordinate Executive Staff.

Mr. Chakko Cheruvattur.—*To reduce the allotment of Rs. 17,832 for "Subordinate executive staff under B" by Rs. 300.*

Forests—Total.

Mr. C. A. Ouseph.—*To reduce the total allotment of Rs. 2,91,200 under "Demand No. IX" by Rs. 55,530.*

Mr. T. A. Ramachandra Ayyar.—*To reduce the allotment of Rs. 2,91,200 under "Demand No. IX" by one rupee.*

Mr. M. K. Raman,—*To reduce the allotment of Rs. 2,70,410 for "IX Forests" by one rupee.*

Mr. K. Sankaran Nambudiri.—*To reduce the total allotment of Rs. 2,91,200 under "Demand No. IX" by Rs. 200.*

Mr. T. A. Ramachandra Ayyar.—Sir, for question 116, I have been supplied with certain figures. From the figures we find there is a clear net loss of 62,875 rupees on elephant capturing operations for the last 15 years. I want to know why this inhuman practice of torturing the poor animals, and that at a very great loss to the Government, should be continued. In Travancore and Mysore they make a very good profit out of these elephant capturing operations. So I move that the expenditure for this practice should be reduced by Rs. 10,000.

Dr. A. G. Menon.—May I know the number of elephants captured within the last 15 years?

Mr. C. Achyuta Menon.—I shall enlighten the House. The total number captured was 86, number sold 28, number died 54. The loss incurred on account of the elephants is not Rs. 62,000 as the Conservator says, but Rs. 92,000. Evidently the pay of the mahouts has not been taken into account by the Conservator. I want to bring to the notice of the Government—I do not know whether I am right, but I am subject to correction—the cost of the annual treatment and special treatment to elephants is deducted from the hire of elephants. If that is so, it is wrong accounting. Money is received by the Government, and spent by the Government and there is no account.

President.—The point is Government should not have anything to do with the capture of elephants at least for some time to come.

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

Dr. A. R Menon.—Rs. 16,700 is allotted, of which Rs. 10,000 was deducted. There is a balance of Rs. 6,700. The reason for the reduction is there are already pits, they might have dug up. They want it annually to open or close it as the case may be, and this does not cost much.

President.—How much does the treating cost, supposing we get no new captures? What is the amount required to look after the elephants we have got already? Can they be maintained with Rs. 6,700?

Mr. A. Sankara Puduval.—Much less is only required.

Mr K. Govinda Menon.—I cannot exactly tell you now

Dr. A. G. Menon.—What is the present number of elephants, and how many can be used for labour? Are there young ones?

President.—We are not at all lucky. We have very few new captures, and they die.

Dr. A. G. Menon.—So the earlier we sell our elephants the better, and stop elephants capture in future.

Mr. K. Govinda Menon.—Three are fit for drawing timber, 4 more for procession. Again, there are 2 which would not be paying for the present purpose, for they are 2 infant tuskers.

President.—We shall keep these 7 and sell the remaining.

Dr. A. G. Menon.—We are unfortunate. So why should we retain these 2 young tuskers? They may also die. They will fetch a good sum, if sold now.

President.—We get only very rarely tuskers, and so they are worth preserving. We shall sell off the cows, and we shall have no more captures.

Dr. A. G. Menon.—My object to press this cut to a division is this. It is clearly seen that we do not want to incur the expenditure.

President.—I do not think my administration will suffer, if I allow this cut.

Mr. K. Govinda Menon.—I think I can manage with this amount of Rs. 6,700,

Dr. A. G. Menon.—Before we leave the elephants, I have to bring to your notice another fact. One elephant is always kept at Trichur in *Anakulam para*, and I don't know why it is so, Sir.

Mr. K. Govinda Menon.—It was undergoing treatment, but unfortunately that died, Sir,

Dr. A. G. Menon.—The Lady Member says that it is giving much nuisance to the persons and students going to the spinning

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

school. For that very purpose I bring this to the notice of the Government.

Mr. K. Govinda Menon.—That animal is dead, Sir.

Dr. A. G. Menon.—Even though this animal is dead, another might come in for treatment. I am told it is used as a hospital.

Mr. Chakko Cheruvattur.—If an elephant dies, it is increasing the expenditure.

Dr. A. G. Menon.—It may be kept 3 or 4 miles away from the town, near some river, where you can get more water and more food materials than concentrating in the centre of the town.

President.—What is the convenience had by keeping it there?

Dr. A. G. Menon.—The next door is the doctor's house. There is another aspect. Supposing that it is suffering from small-pox or cholera which is a contageous disease, no other elephants can pass through the road, without getting infection. So it may be removed 2 or 3 miles away from the town very near some river, and I think that will be a proper place and not in the heart of the town.

President.—I shall see that such inconvenience is not caused hereafter.

Mr. C. Achyuta Menon.—Treatment charges are not accounted for. The present practice is objectionable, if it is so. It is a point to be noted. Treatment charges are paid out of the hire money which, if it is so, is wrong accounting.

Mr. K. Krishna Pisharodi.—It is not so. We get regular sanctions.

President.—Cut motion No. 6, Mr. M. K. Raman.

Mr. M. K. Raman.—I withdraw. My object in tabling this cut motion is to put a stop to the further capture of elephants.

President.—Nos. 7, 8 and 9 are all withdrawn.

Cut motion No. 10, Dr. A. G. Menon.

Dr. A. G. Menon.—I tabled this motion simply to bring to the notice of the Government that orders are pending on a petition sent by the inhabitants of Nemmara and Chittur regarding the B form. Just to give some relief to them, I request the Government to pass favourable orders as early as possible.

President.—Nos. 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15 are withdrawn.

The question before the House is whether Demand No. IX under "Forests" for Rs. 2,70,410 be reduced by Rs. 65,530.

The motion was put to the vote and carried. The grant was made.

Demand No. X—Tramway—Rs. 1,25,023.

Mr. K. Govinda Menon.—Sir, I rise to move for a sum of Rs. 1,25,023 under "Demand No. X—Tramway."

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly